

## **In Hot Pursuit**

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The term “in hot pursuit” is one normally associated with a law enforcement officer chasing someone who is trying to elude them. It carries the idea that if we chase the suspect fast enough and long enough, the individual will eventually be caught. However, have you ever associated the term with our attempts to reach happiness?

I once read in a comic strip, that an engineer had discovered the exact combination of fruits and vegetables that would stimulate that part of the brain that makes us experience a feeling of happiness. He was approached by government agents who wanted to confiscate his “happiness drug.” When he told them that we all have a constitutional right to happiness, he was reminded that the Constitution only guarantees us the right to the *pursuit* of happiness. It doesn’t guarantee us the right to actually *be* happy.

U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft, in his book, *Lessons from a Father to His Son*, relates that he frequently heard his father pray for his children. However, he thought that it was interesting that he never heard him pray for his children just to be happy. He said that his father realized that the pursuit of happiness for its own sake is often a frustrating, disillusioning and futile effort. Instead, he encouraged his children to aspire to more noble aspirations.

I think the reason more people do not find happiness is because they are pursuing pleasure instead of happiness, enjoyment instead of joy and fullness instead of fulfillment. We can chase after the things that will give us momentary satisfaction, but we will soon find that it does not give us a sense of achievement.

Instead, we need to involve ourselves in attaining higher goals. We will find a greater sense of fulfillment by doing something for someone with a greater need than we will in doing something for ourselves. It is a swift in perspective wherein we begin to see others before ourselves. We are more concerned with serving than with being served, or even serving ourselves.

Jesus told his disciples that if they truly wanted to be great in God’s eyes, they needed to become servants to others. He knew that when we focus on serving others, we find a sense of joy and satisfaction to which nothing else can compare. We see the accumulation of wealth a means by which we can help a greater number of people to a greater degree, rather than a goal unto itself. It is a means, not an end.

When we live our lives in this manner, we will find joy, peace and satisfaction and the end result will be that we ultimately find happiness.

Semper Fi in the Lord and I hope to see you in Church on Sunday.